DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 114 020 HE 006 927

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TITLE Increasing Access to Postsecondary Education-The Federal Role.
PUB DATE 29 Aug 75
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the International Conference on Education of the International Bureau of Education (35th, Geneva, Switzerland, August 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.58 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Educational Opportunities; *Equal Education; *Federal Legislation; Federal Programs; Financial Support; *Government Role; Minority Groups; *Post Secondary Education; Tables (Data)

ABSTRACT

"Postsecondary" education, that is, education beyond the 12th-grade level, includes vocational, technical, trade, and business schools as well as two- and four-year colleges. The institutions may be public, private, or proprietary. Emphasis on the wide spectrum stems from a national tenet--that there is honor and dignity in work whether it is solely intellectual, primarily physical, or a blend of the two, by the same token, the integrity of learning, of job preparation, can be as valid outside the traditional world of academe as it is within and from a belief in freedom of individual choice. In recent years, provision of postsecondary opportunity for all the nation's youth has been a national educational priority, and the largest single share of government support for higher learning has been used to reach this goal. Federal assistance to higher education began more than a hundred years ago with land grants for the establishment of colleges to teach the agricultural and mechanical arts. It continued with the G.I. Bill; the Education Act of 1958; the Higher Education Act of 1965, which established the Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant, the College-Work Study Program, Guaranteed Student Loan Program; and the 1972 Amendments to the Higher Education Act, establishing a new Basic Educational Opportunity Grant Program that reaffirms the principle of postsecondary education as a right, not a privilege, which must be accessible to all who qualify. Together, the various federal programs help several million needy students each year. (Author/KE)

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INCREASING ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION--THE FEDERAL ROLE*

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U.S. COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IT IS A VERY GREAT PLEASURE AND A PRIVILEGE TO DISCUSS WITH YOU TODAY THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN MAKING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION A REALITY FOR EVERY STUDENT IN OUR COUNTRY WHO MAY WISH TO PARTICIPATE.

THE TERM "POSTSECONDARY" REFERS TO EDUCATION BEYOND OUR SECONDARY SCHOOL, OR TWELFTH-GRADE LEVEL. IT IS EDUCATION THAT OCCURS AFTER THE STUDENT HAS EARNED A DIPLOMA OR CERTIFICATE OF TWELFTH-GRADE LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT, EITHER THROUGH THE FORMAL SCHOOL STRUCTURE OR THROUGH EXAMINATION. THE POSTSECONDARY UNIVERSE INCLUDES VOCATIONAL, TECHNICAL, TRADE, AND BUSINESS SCHOOLS AS WELL AS UNIVERSITIES AND TWO AND FOUR YEAR COLLEGES. THE INSTITUTIONS MAY BE PUBLIC, MAINTAINED FOR THE MOST PART BY TAXES; THEY MAY BE PRIVATE, OPERATED ON A NON-PROFIT BASIS; OR PROPRIETARY, OPERATED BY INDIVIDUALS OR CORPORATIONS TO MAKE A PROFIT.

TO ONE WHO HAS NOT DEVOTED A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES, THE POSTSECONDARY CONCEPT ITSELF MAY BE SOMETHING OF A CURIOSITY. ONE MIGHT ASK WHY WE HAVE PLACED SO MUCH EMPHASIS ON THE UNIVERSE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION INSTEAD OF CONCENTRATING OUR INTEREST AND OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES ON EDUCATION PROVIDED BY COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, WHICH HAS, AFTER ALL, HISTORICAL PRECEDENCE.

OUR EMPHASIS ON THE WIDE SPECTRUM STEMS FROM A BASIC NATIONAL TENET--THAT THERE IS HONOR AND DIGNITY IN WORK WHETHER IT IS SOLELY INTELLECTUAL,

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* PREPARED FOR 35TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION; GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, AUGUST 29, 1975.

PRIMARILY PHYSICAL, OR A BLEND OF THE TWO. BY THE SAME TOKEN, THE INTEGRITY OF LEARNING, OF JOB PREPARATION, CAN BE AS VALID OUTSIDE THE TRADITIONAL WORLD OF ACADEME AS IT IS WITHIN.

ANOTHER BASIC TENET IS OUR BELIEF IN FREEDOM OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE. WE ARE PHILOSOPHICALLY COMMITTED TO THE FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO SELECT EDUCATION THAT WILL BRING THAT PERSON THE GREATEST MEASURE OF PERSONAL SATISFACTION, BOTH IN PERSONAL CAREER AND IN USE OF LEISURE TIME. HOWEVER, TO BE ASSURED OF THIS FREEDOM OF CHOICE, THE INDIVIDUAL MUST HAVE A GENUINE OPPORTUNITY TO CARRY OUT HIS CAREER ASPIRATION--AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATION.

IN RECENT YEARS, PROVISION OF POSTSECONDARY OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL THE NATION'S YOUTH HAS BEEN A NATIONAL EDUCATION PRIORITY, AND THE LARGEST SINGLE SHARE OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR HIGHER LEARNING HAS BEEN USED TO REACH THIS GOAL. WHILE WE HAVE MADE TELLING PROGRESS, OUR DISTANCE HAS NOT BEEN SPANNED AND WE STILL HAVE A WAY TO TRAVEL.

AS YOU KNOW, EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES IS NOT PRIMARILY AN ENDEAVOR OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. EACH STATE AND TERRITORY SUPPORTS A SYSTEM OF FREE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLING FOR ALL STUDENTS WITHIN ITS LEGAL JURISDICTION. EDUCATION STANDARDS HAVE BEEN REACHED THAT ARE SIMILAR ENOUGH TO ALLOW UNRESTRICTED STUDENT MOBILITY ACROSS STATE LINES. EACH STATE AND TERRITORY ALSO SUPPORTS THROUGH TAXATION AT LEAST ONE IF NOT SEVERAL INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING.

SOMETIMES EDUCATION AT PUBLICLY SUPPORTED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING IS FREE, BUT MOST OFTEN IT IS NOT. THE COST, ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE LOW, CAN ACT AS

AN OBSTACLE FOR MANY POTENTIAL STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES, AND IT IS THIS BLOCK TO ACCESS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS STRIVING TO REMOVE.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO HIGHER EDUCATION BEGAN MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS AGO WHEN LAND GRANTS WERE MADE TO STATES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COLLEGES TO TEACH THE AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL ARTS TO THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE INDUSTRIAL CLASSES. AFTER THAT, A RELATIVELY PASSIVE ROLE WAS MAINTAINED UNTIL A FEW MONTHS BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR ENDED. AT THAT TIME, WHAT WE COMMONLY REFER TO AS THE "G.I. BILL" CAME INTO BEING. IN JUST A FEW YEARS AFTER ITS INCEPTION, CAMPUSES ACROSS THE COUNTRY SWELLED WITH ENROLLMENTS OF STUDENTS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE--MANY OF THEM PERSONS WHO, WITHOUT THE OPPORTUNITY EXTENDED BY THE BILL, WOULD HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO INCLUDE HIGHER EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IN THEIR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. TO AN EXTENT THIS BROAD-SCALE FORM OF AID ACHIEVED ACCESSIBILITY, BUT IT WAS LIMITED TO A PARTICULAR CATEGORY OF CITIZEN--THE MILITARY VETERAN. FINANCIAL NEED WAS NOT A CRITERION FOR PARTICIPATION.

AS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, PROGRESS IN EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES IS INFLUENCED BY A VARIETY OF FACTORS. THE EDUCATION ACT OF 1958, PASSED IN THE INTEREST OF MEETING AN INCREASED NEED FOR ENGINEERS AND SCIENTISTS, IS AN EXAMPLE OF A DEVELOPMENT THAT HAD LARGE-SCALE IMPLICATIONS FOR HELPING EQUALIZE ACCESS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION. THIS ACT WAS DESIGNED TO DEVELOP THE TALENTS OF YOUTH IN SUCH AREAS AS SCIENCE, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES. THE LANGUAGE OF THE LAW DID NOT ADDRESS CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, OR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, IT DID PROVIDE, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE NATION'S HISTORY, A SUBSTANTIAL STUDENT

LOAN PROGRAM, WHICH MARKED THE BEGINNING OF BROAD-GAUGED FEDERAL EFFORTS TO INCREASE ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION. THE PROGRAM PROVIDES FUNDS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO MAKE LOW-INTEREST, DEFERRED PAYMENT LOANS TO GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS. FEDERAL GRANTS TO THE INSTITUTIONS MAKE UP 90 PERCENT OF THE LOAN FUNDS. TEN PERCENT IS CONTRIBUTED BY THE INSTITUTION, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTING THE LOAN RECIPIENTS.

NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIVE WAS A GOOD YEAR FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS. IT WAS A PARTICULARLY GOOD YEAR FOR PERSONS WHO COULD NOT AFFORD EDUCATION BEYOND THE FREE SECONDARY LEVEL. THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965 ADDRESSED THE PROBLEM OF UNEQUAL ACCESS DIRECTLY THROUGH THE CREATION OF GRANTS AND WORK STUDY PROGRAMS THAT WOULD ENORMOUSLY EXPAND THE DIMENSIONS OF OPPORTUNITY FOR THE FINANCIALLY DISTRESSED. AS WITH THE LOANS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE NATIONAL DEFENSE EDUCATION ACT, FUNDS FOR THESE PROGRAMS ARE AWARDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS, WHICH SELECT PARTICIPANTS AND DETERMINE HOW MUCH THEY WILL RECEIVE.

THE GRANT, NOW CALLED THE SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT, IS SUPPORTED ENTIRELY BY FEDERAL FUNDS AND TARGETS THOSE PERSONS WHOSE NEED IS GREATEST. THE COLLEGE WORK-STUDY PROGRAM COMBINES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL FUNDS TO ENCOURAGE AND EXTEND EMPLOYMENT, BOTH ON AND OFF THE CAMPUS, FOR STUDENTS WHO MUST EARN TO OFFSET EXPENSES.

THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965 ALSO ESTABLISHED A GUARANTEED STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM FOR MIDDLE-INCOME PERSONS WHO NEEDED SOME RELIEF FROM THE RISING COSTS OF EDUCATION. THE PROGRAM IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS OF DIVERSE GROUPS. THE PRIVATELY

OWNED BANKS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE THE LOAN PRINCIPAL, THE LOAN IS INSURED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AND THE POSTSECONDARY COMMUNITY PROVIDES THE EDUCATION. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES PAYMENT OF THE LOAN--IF THE STUDENT FAILS TO PAY THE LOAN THE GOVERNMENT PAYS THE BANK.

THE 1972 AMENDMENTS TO THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT, HOWEVER, MAY BE GIVEN CREDIT FOR FIRMLY ESTABLISHING A SWEEPING CONCEPT OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND FOR PROVIDING AUTHORITY FOR AN UNPRECEDENTED NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO EXTEND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES TO EVERYONE, REGARDLESS OF ABILITY TO PAY. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED PRIMARILY THROUGH A NEW BASIC EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM THAT REAFFIRMS THE PRINCIPLE THAT POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IS A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE, AND MUST BE MADE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL WHO QUALIFY.

UNLIKE OTHER FEDERAL AID, THE BASIC GRANT IS AWARDED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENT. THE GRANT GIVES THE RECIPIENT FLEXIBILITY IN DETERMINING EDUCATION GOALS BECAUSE THE STUDENT IS ENTITLED TO THE GRANT REGARDLESS OF WHERE HE CHOOSES TO ATTEND COLLEGE. THE GRANT MAY NOT EXCEED ONE HALF THE COST OF ATTENDING THE INSTITUTION. IT IS DESIGNED TO FORM THE BASE ON WHICH A PYRAMID OF AID CAN BE BUILT, TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL BY THE SELECTED COLLEGE OR SCHOOL.

TOGETHER, THE VARIOUS FEDERAL PROGRAMS HELP SEVERAL MILLION NEEDY STUDENTS EACH YEAR. FEDERAL ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS, THOUGH, IS NOT SOLELY FINANCIAL. IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY AND ENCOURAGE THE PARTICIPATION OF THE DISADVANTAGED IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION, THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS SUCH PROGRAMS THAT STRIVE TO GIVE COUNSELING ASSISTANCE AND OTHER ENCOURAGEMENT TO TALENTED STUDENTS OF

LOW INCOME THROUGH EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS. THESE PROGRAMS PROVIDE A VARIETY OF SERVICES--RANGING FROM COUNSELING PRIOR TO ENTRY INTO AN INSTITUTION TO TUTORING AND GUIDANCE AFTERAWARDS. THEY ARE DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE CAPABLE STUDENTS TO ENTER COLLEGE AND TO HELP THEM SUCCEED.

THE GOVERNMENT'S HELPING ROLE WILL CONTINUE. THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED THAT AID TO STUDENTS IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS BE EXTENDED AND INCREASINGLY REDIRECTED TO ASSURE THAT EVERYONE WHO IS ELIGIBLE WILL RECEIVE A COMBINATION OF FEDERAL GRANTS AND SUBSIDIZED LOANS TO MAKE UP THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COST OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND THE AMOUNT THE FAMILY CAN CONTRIBUTE. THE AIM IS TO CLOSE THE COST GAP FOR STUDENTS FROM MODERATE AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES SO THAT THEY MAY ENJOY THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES ENJOYED BY THOSE WITH HIGHER INCOME.

IN BRIEF, THOUGH EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESS HAVE NOT YET BEEN FULLY REALIZED, PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE. EACH YEAR LARGER PERCENTAGES OF LOW-INCOME YOUTH MAKE UP OUR POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENTS. WHILE IT WOULD BE IMPROPER TO ASCRIBE THIS PROGRESS ENTIRELY TO THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, FEDERAL ASSISTANCE IS CLEARLY A MAJOR FACTOR AND ONE OF INCREASING SIGNIFICANCE.

WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT OUR CONTINUED COMMITMENT WILL BRING TO FULFILLMENT THE NATION'S GOAL TO REMOVE THE ECONOMIC BARRIERS TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.

# # #

STATISTICS

GI BILL

Since inception, over 15 million veterans have been helped.

CAMPUS BASED PROGRAMS

National Direct Student Loan (National Defense Education Act of 1958)

Cumulative since inception	Federal contribution:	$2.8 billion
	Number of loans	6.5 million
Academic Year 1975-76	Federal contribution:	$321 million
(combined Federal and institutional funds)	Number of loans (est.)	730,000
	Average amount (est.)	$600
	Participating Institutions	2,942

College Work-Study (Higher Education Act of 1965)

Cumulative since inception	Federal contribution:	$2.1 billion
	Number of jobs	4.1 million
Academic Year 1975-76	Federal contribution:	$420 million
(combined Federal and institutional funds	Number of jobs (est.)	725,000
	Average earnings (est.)	$650
	Participating Institutions	3,278

Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (Higher Education Act of 1965)

Cumulative since inception	Federal contribution:	$1.6 billion
	Number of grants	2.6 million
Academic year 1975-76	Federal contribution:	$240 million
	Number of grants (est.)	343,000
	Average amount (est.)	$760
	Participating Institutions	3,394

Basic Educational Opportunity Grant (Education Amendments of 1972)

Cumulative since inception	Federal contribution:	$1.35 billion
Academic Year 1975-76	Federal funds available	$800 million
	Number of grants (est.)	1 million
	Average amount	$800

(Participating instituitons 5800)

Guaranteed Student Loan Program (Higher Education Act of 1965)

	Dollars borrowed	Number of loans
Cumulative since inception	$8.23 billion	7.95 million
Academic Year 1975-76	$1.49 billion (est.)	995,000 (est.)

(Participating institutions: 8827)

Trio & Educational Opportunity Centers

Cumulative since inception	Federal contribution:	$535 million
	Disadvantaged students aided:	1.7 million (est.)

Higher Education Institution and Enrollment Statistics

In 1900, the number of higher education institutions totaled 977.

In 1974, the number higher education institutions, including 2-year institutions, totaled 3,004. Of this number, 1,140 were 2-year institutions.

# # #

	1900	1974
Undergraduate Degree Credit Enrollment:	231,761	7,833,000
Graduate Degree Credit Enrollment	5,831	1,190,000
Total	237,592	9,023,000
2-year college enrollment:	----	2,198,000